



# Choosing Folk Song for Children 5-6 Years Old Through Teaching Organization Music Activities in Preschool

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## Abstract:

Folk songs have the ability to have a strong impact on people's thoughts and emotions, helping us develop aesthetic abilities, thinking, intellectual, physical qualities, and good moral feelings. More importantly, it forms national consciousness and love for the homeland. Currently, teachers are aware of the importance of using folk songs for 5-6 year old children in organizing musical activities in preschools. However, preschool teachers do not know how to choose folk songs in organizing and teaching music activities, causing the results of the activities to be low. This article focuses on analyzing the current situation of choosing folk songs for 5-6 year

old children through organizing and teaching musical activities, in order to form in children the goodness and beauty in folk songs. From there, children will develop a love and appreciation for Vietnamese folk songs.

**Keywords:** Selection, folk songs, musical activities, preschool teachers, children 5-6 years old.

## Introduction

Children aged 5-6 have a good understanding of music; they enjoy listening to it and are keen to participate in musical activities. Music serves as a tool for children to perceive the world around them, develop speech, enhance communication skills, and exchange emotions. For children, music is a magical world full of emotions.

Since infancy, the gentle lullabies from their mothers, such as "The heron goes out to eat at night / The bean must be soft to twist its neck down into the pond / Oh grandpa, please fish me out..." have nurtured the innocent souls of these children. It's these lullabies, these simple

folk songs, that lull children into peaceful sleep. It can be seen that children are exposed to Vietnamese folk songs from a very young age, helping them appreciate the goodness, beauty, and unique characteristics of the nation through generations. Folk melodies with ethnic nuances should be introduced to children early in their innocent and pure childhood.

Currently, in preschool education programs, children mainly encounter folk songs through listening to teachers sing; they haven't been engaged much with folk tunes, nursery rhymes, or folk songs. Therefore, educating children about folk music in teaching musical activities is



crucial, helping them develop a love for nature, their country, and love and compassion for people; shaping and comprehensively developing the character of the young.

## Some Conceptual Definitions

### Selection

The concept of selection originates from the Latin word *selectio*. It pertains to the action and effectiveness of choosing one or more individuals or other entities. The chosen ones are separated from the rest according to the preferences of the selector.

### Folk Music

According to author Hùng Lân (1972), folk music consists of songs passed down orally among people, often without knowledge of the original author, the era of origin, or its roots. It is only known that its essence differs significantly from contemporary compositions.

In summary, "Folk music is comprised of everyday songs, without a known author, created based on the practical needs of people's lives, reflecting the musical aesthetics of different regions and ethnic groups. Folk music consists of songs created collectively by the people and transmitted orally from one generation to another, from one region to another."

### Musical Activities

According to author Phạm Thị Hoà (2014), musical activities involve the coordination of music with bodily movements such as dancing or using musical toys to tap along with the rhythm, aiming to provide children with a sense of rhythm and contribute positively to their intellectual and physical development.

Musical activities are organized according to a planned schedule under the direct guidance of teachers. Musical activities for preschoolers include teaching singing, listening to singing, teaching movement to music, and musical games.

Musical activities in preschool enrich the spiritual life of children, enabling them to appreciate beauty, and contribute to their

comprehensive character education and development.

## Selecting Folk Music in Organizing Musical Activities for Children

Selecting folk music in organizing musical activities for preschool children involves teachers introducing songs created by the working people and passed down orally through generations into activities such as listening to singing, teaching singing, movement to music, and musical games. This aims to instill in children a love for their homeland and country, gratitude towards their ancestors, fostering love, sharing, and promoting comprehensive development in morals, intellect, physique, and aesthetics.

## Subject and Research Methods

### Research Subjects

The study surveyed 40 preschool teachers in 3 schools: Hoa Mai Preschool, Tân Trào Preschool, and Phan Thiết Preschool in Tuyên Quang Province, and 120 children from these preschools within Tuyên Quang city, Tuyên Quang Province.

### Research Methods

The research methods utilized include: Pedagogical observation method and survey method using questionnaires. The results obtained from these methods were analyzed using SPSS 16.0 software.

## Research Findings

### Survey Results on Teachers' Perception Regarding the Selection of Folk Music for 5-6 Year Old Children in Organizing Musical Activities at Preschools

During the implementation of the research project, to gain insight into teachers' perceptions regarding the selection of folk music for 5-6 year old children in organizing musical activities at Hoa Mai Preschool, Tân Trào Preschool, and Phan Thiết Preschool in Tuyên Quang city, Tuyên Quang Province, we posed the question:

"Could you please elaborate on the role of selecting folk music for 5-6 year old children in

organizing musical activities?" The results obtained are as follows:

**Table 1. Teachers' Perspectives on the Role of Selecting Folk Music for 5-6 Year Old Children in Organizing Musical Activities at Preschools**

No.	Beliefs	Number of teachers	Rate %
1	Highly significant	10	25%
2	Significant	20	50%
3	Neutral	5	12.5%
4	Unnecessary	0	0%

From the aforementioned results, it can be observed that teachers have a fairly good understanding of the importance of selecting folk songs for 5-6 year old children at preschools. Teachers perceive the selection of folk songs for children as highly significant, with a percentage of (25%), followed by very significant as the highest criterion (62.5%), while the proportion of teachers considering the selection of folk songs for children as moderately important is relatively low, at only (12.5%).

This indicates that selecting folk songs from the preschool age is important and necessary. Therefore, our analysis of the current situation of selecting folk songs for 5-6 year old children is practical and aligned with real needs.

We proceeded to explore teachers' perceptions of the benefits that folk songs bring to children with the question: "In your opinion, what are the effects of introducing children to various genres of folk songs?" The results obtained are as follows:

**Table 2. Teachers' Perception of the Significance of Folk Music for the Development of 5-6 Year Old Children**

No.	criteria	Number of teachers	Rate %
1	Language Development, Memory, and Imagination Enhancement for Children.	35	87.5%
2	Development of Aesthetic Sense, Musical Perception Ability for Children.	36	90%
3	Formation, Development, and Cultivation of National Sentiments for Children.	38	95%
4	Other Perspectives.	4	4%

From the survey results, it is evident that teachers hold a high regard for the role of folk music in the development of preschool children. The criterion most highly rated by teachers is the cultivation, development, and nurturing of national sentiments in children, with 95%. Through direct interviews, teachers shared that folk music is a distinctive cultural essence, the soul of the nation that nurtures the spirit, heart, and intellect of Vietnamese people. At the preschool age, children are nurtured through folk songs, nursery rhymes for entertainment,

practicing speech, and becoming acquainted with nature and daily life. It can be seen that folk songs, though intangible, form strong bonds connecting people's hearts, creating the strength for the nation to overcome historical ups and downs. Folk songs shape and nurture love for the homeland, the country, serving as a bridge through time for us to return to our roots, our ancestors, our nation.

90% of teachers believe that folk music helps develop aesthetic sense and music appreciation

skills for children. For preschoolers, selecting folk songs along with appropriate teaching methods for each learning activity aims to impart knowledge and skills to children in an understandable and engaging manner. Through these activities, children's emotions are nurtured, imagination stimulated, and interest in music and other subjects is cultivated. Selecting folk songs in teaching music for children establishes initial foundations, familiarizes them with music through sensory and practical activities, fostering their love and interest in music, promoting comprehensive development, and equipping them with necessary skills to engage in music activities and other subjects in the future.

Furthermore, a small percentage of teachers (4%) believe that selecting folk songs also helps develop physical abilities through singing, providing opportunities for children to express their emotions. Folk music serves as a means to bring the world to children's souls, contributing to their comprehensive personality education.

In conclusion, teachers highly appreciate the role and significance of folk music in children's

development. Folk songs serve as a magical tool, fostering children's love for nature, homeland, and compassion for people. Folk songs also contribute to the development of aesthetic, moral, intellectual, and physical abilities, laying the foundation for comprehensive personality development, consolidating children's knowledge in learning and play, providing effective support for preschool education.

### Survey Results on the Level of Using Folk Music for 5-6 Year Old Children in Organizing Musical Activities at Preschools

Currently, organizing musical activities is receiving considerable attention from teachers. They are not only interested in familiarizing children with children's songs but also with familiar folk songs. To understand the selection of songs in musical activities for children, we asked the question: "In organizing musical activities, what genres of music do you usually introduce to children?" and obtained the following results:

**Table 3. Level of Selection of Folk Music for 5-6 Year Old Children in Musical Activities**

No.	Criteria	Number of teachers	Rate %
1	Children's Songs	5	70%
2	Folk Songs	12	30%

From the above results, we can observe a significant disparity between these two music genres. In musical activities, teachers tend to prioritize children's songs more, with a ratio of 70% of teachers selecting children's songs, while folk songs only account for about 30%. The reason for such a high disparity is that children's songs often have cheerful, familiar melodies that are easier to understand and more suitable for children compared to folk songs. This situation has led to folk music genres gradually fading away and becoming unfamiliar to children. The

current requirement is to incorporate folk songs into musical activities for children. Teachers should introduce children to the joy of folk art in general and folk songs in particular by organizing various activities to familiarize them with folk songs.

To understand the extent to which children are introduced to folk songs in musical activities, we asked the question: "Do you often introduce 5-6 year old children to folk songs in your class?" The results obtained are as follows:

**Table 4. The Extent to which Teachers Introduce 5-6 Year Old Children to Folk Songs**

No.	Criteria	Number of teachers	Rate %
1	very frequently	5	12,5%
2	Usually	12	30%
3	occasionally	23	57,5%
4	Never	0	0%

From the results above, we can see that teachers have become aware of using folk songs in musical activities for children. However, at the three preschools, only about 12.5% of teachers choose folk songs in music education activities very frequently; 30% of teachers use folk songs on a frequent basis; 57.5% of teachers use folk songs occasionally, and no teacher does not select folk songs. This indicates that teachers

have recognized and incorporated folk songs into children's educational activities, but the level of usage is still low and has not yielded high educational effectiveness.

Furthermore, we also delved into the types of folk songs that teachers commonly apply in music education activities for 5-6 year old children, as depicted in the following table:

**Table 5. The Extent of Using Various Types of Folk Songs in the Education of 5-6 Year Old Children**

No.	Type of folk song	frequently		occasionally		Never	
		quantity	%	quantity	%	quantity	%
1	Singing folk songs in rounds, call-and-response	10	25	25	62.5	5	12.5
2	Verse	6	15	18	45	16	40
3	Chorus	3	7.5	20	50	17	42.5
4	Lullaby singing	10	25	25	62.5	5	12.5
5	Quan hò singing	8	20	23	57.5	9	22.5

From the results above, we can observe that the usage level of different folk song genres varies among teachers. The highest frequency of usage is observed in lullabies, nursery rhymes, and folk chants, with 25% of teachers employing them frequently, followed by folk singing (quan hò) at 20%. Through discussions, teachers shared that lullabies, nursery rhymes, and chants are familiar to children, and using them in musical activities is more practical, hence the higher frequency of usage.

At a lower frequency, we find melodic tunes (15%) and folk songs (7.5%) being used frequently by teachers. Notably, all genres are utilized by teachers in musical activities. This indicates that teachers have incorporated various folk song genres into musical activities for children, although the frequency is relatively low. Each folk song genre has its own merits,

conveying emotions and love passed down through generations. Therefore, teachers should introduce children to all genres of folk songs to help them recognize the richness and diversity of our nation's folk music heritage. This also contributes to instilling a sense of pride in children towards the traditional music of our nation.

**The Current Status of Using Folk Songs Selection Methods for 5-6 Year Old Children in Organizing Music Activities in Preschools**

In music activities for preschool children, teachers can introduce various folk song genres in different lessons to instill specific interests in children and foster their comprehensive development. During our survey, we asked the question: "What methods do you typically use to introduce folk song genres to children?" The results are as follows:



**Table 6. The Extent of Using Various Folk Song Genres in the Education of 5-6 Year Old Children**

No.	modalities	Number of teacher	Rate %
1	Vocal training	20	50%
2	Music listening	30	75%
3	Movement to music	8	20%
4	Musical games	15	37,5%

From the results above, we can observe that the usage level of different folk song genres varies among teachers. The highest frequency of usage is observed in lullabies, nursery rhymes, and folk chants, with 25% of teachers employing them frequently, followed by folk singing (quan họ) at 20%. Through discussions, teachers shared that lullabies, nursery rhymes, and chants are familiar to children, and using them in musical activities is more practical, hence the higher frequency of usage.

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**Table 7. The Extent of Using Various Folk Song Genres in the Education of 5-6 Year Old Children**

No.	Criteria	Number of teacher	Rate %
1	Organizing purposeful music activities (educational activities)	34	85%
2	In daily routines	9	22,5%
3	During festive occasions	8	20%

The majority of teachers introduce children to folk songs during purposeful instructional activities, accounting for 85%. Additionally, in some schools, children are exposed to folk music at all times and places, in daily activities (22.5%) and even during festivals (20%). For preschoolers, their psychological characteristics enable them to absorb information quickly but also forget rapidly without regular practice. Therefore, besides scheduled instructional

hours, teachers should allow children to listen to and sing folk songs they have learned whenever possible. For children to truly appreciate folk songs both in content and artistry, it requires a long and continuous process. This repetitive process helps children to deeply internalize what they have learned and heard.

## Advantages and Challenges for Teachers in Selecting Folk Songs for 5-6 Year Olds in Organizing Music Activities at Preschools

With the aim of proposing solutions to incorporate folk songs into music activities for

children, we surveyed teachers with the question: "Please describe the advantages and challenges you encounter when selecting folk songs for children." The results are as follows:

**Table 8. Advantages for Teachers in Selecting Folk Songs for Children at School**

No.	Criteria	Number of teacher	Rate %
1	The melodious notes of folk songs produce sounds that easily resonate with individuals, particularly children who enjoy singing, listening, and quickly memorizing folk tunes.	25	62.5%
2	Musical equipment and attire are fully provided.	13	32.5%
3	Teachers are trained through academic programs and possess musical aptitude.	2	5%

**Table 9. Difficulties for Teachers in Selecting Folk Songs for Children at School**

No.	Criteria	Number of teacher	Rate %
1	The quantity of folk songs available for children is still insufficient.	20	50%
2	Musical equipment and attire for music activities remain limited.	17	42,5%
3	Folk songs are challenging to sing due to their distinctly regional characteristics.	37	92,5%

From the above results, we can see that teachers have advantages in selecting folk tunes for children, such as the melodious notes of folk songs creating sounds that easily resonate with children, who enjoy singing, listening, and quickly memorizing folk songs (62% of teachers chose this option). Most teachers believe that the melodies of folk songs create sounds that easily resonate with children, who enjoy singing, listening, and quickly memorizing folk songs. Because of this reason, introducing folk songs to children is extremely advantageous because once children like them, they will make a great effort to memorize and express their emotions through folk songs.

Furthermore, the availability of music equipment and attire (32% of teachers chose this option) contributes significantly to children's music appreciation. Children will feel more enthusiastic and engaged. Alongside these advantages, teachers also encounter numerous difficulties when organizing folk songs. These include the fact that folk songs commonly encountered in programs are mainly sung by the teacher for the children to listen to, with very few songs taught for the children to sing.

Additionally, in the criterion where teachers are trained through schools and have musical talent (5% of teachers chose this option), it can be seen that most preschool teachers have not received formal training in musical talent, so this is only an advantage for a few teachers.

In addition to the advantages, teachers also face many difficulties such as: Folk songs are difficult to sing due to their regional characteristics (92.5%), some songs are not suitable for the teacher's vocal range. There are many melodious notes that are difficult to sing. Furthermore, the number of folk songs available for children is too limited (50%), and there are many limitations in music equipment and attire (42.5%). It can be seen that the level of selection by teachers varies for each criterion. Therefore, each teacher needs to capitalize on the advantages and take measures to overcome limitations to achieve high efficiency when introducing folk songs into the organization of music activities in preschools.

## Conclusion

Traditional music education, including the selection of folk songs for preschool children, is a means of instilling in them appropriate sentiments for music in general, and traditional music in particular, and shaping the character of authentic Vietnamese people.

However, the current use of folk songs in music activities for preschool children is still low. The forms and methods of use also have many limitations. Therefore, preschool teachers need to educate children to understand the traditional music of the nation. By selecting outstanding folk genres combined with modern musical instruments, various harmony arrangements, and different performance styles in organizing music activities in preschools.

Currently, teachers have a good awareness of selecting folk songs for 5-6-year-old children in organizing music activities in preschools and have used them in music activities for children. However, the level of usage is still not frequent.

Teachers have used various methods to select different folk song genres in organizing music activities for 5-6-year-old children in preschools. However, the focus is mainly on listening and singing activities, with other activities being less frequent and not used regularly.

In addition to the advantages, teachers also encounter some difficulties when selecting folk songs. This reality serves as a basis for the author to propose some measures for selecting folk tunes in organizing music activities for 5-6-year-old children in preschools today, contributing to the comprehensive improvement of children's education.

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